

7322U

SILVER STAR BIBLE SCHOOL - 1987

## THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

Speaker: Bro. Colin Hollamby

Study #1: Man's View of the Kingdom of Men

Reading: Daniel 2

Brother chairman and our dear brethren and sisters, and our dear young people.

We would like to begin our consideration for this morning, by turning to the 24th chapter of Matthew's gospel. In Matthew 24, we are all familiar with the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ is uttering what we commonly know as the Olivet prophecy. In verse 15 we read these words, 'When ye therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth let him understand), then let them which be in Judea, flee into the mountains'. There is a very grave warning for us all in those words b&s and young people. Jesus Christ did not tell the people of His day, who the power was; He expected them to understand what Daniel had said, in symbolic language. The warning which comes down to us today is this, that the people who didn't move out, perished in the onslaught of the abomination that made desolate. What we are saying by that, b&s, is this, that their correct understanding of the prophetic utterances made them wise unto life; now it's sadly true that we don't always appreciate that fact! Prophecy is no different today than it was then, it has been given by the same infallible God. It is therefore, b&s, something which we must come to grips with, and over and above that, it is something which we are able to come to grips with, for our God has never given us anything, b&s, that we cannot understand. As we were saying last evening, it is only when we begin to rightly divide it, that it will stand erect in our lives, and it will make an impact on our lives, it will cause us to walk upon the high places of the earth, and it will induct us into glory into the kingdom of God. For the apostle Paul says to us in Romans 2 that there are people who are seeking for glory and honour and immortality, that is, eternal life. Our quest for eternal life, b&s, has been very greatly helped along by the more sure word of prophecy, which our God has so graciously given unto us in many ways.

In that remarkable chapter from which we have read this morning, Daniel 2, we do indeed have a depiction to the mind of a man by God of the subsequent events that would occur upon the kingdom of men. As our brother Stephen has well pointed out this morning, b&s, that kingdom of men began a long time before Daniel was on the earth; it has always been a system that has been opposed to the ways and to the purposes of God. Yet the wisdom of God, the almighty power of God, b&s, has been able to control that kingdom for His own ends, and here we have seen just this morning, mighty and

illustrious kings, men who figured they should have had a nest among the stars; men who in their own minds had exalted themselves above the Most High. Yet the Most High was completely in control, because as we know the prophet Daniel says, 'the Most High rules in the kingdom of men and He sets up over it, whomsoever He will!'

So when we come to the prophecy of Daniel, we are looking, b&s and young people, at a very important utterance from God. It is no less important and no more important than any other part of the Word of God, and so in our minds we have to try to elevate these prophetic utterances to their rightful place in the divine stand of things. They are important utterances! they have been given to us, so that we can become wise unto salvation, and if we are wise, we will rightly divide them. We will open them so that that more sure word of prophecy might indeed, lead us into the kingdom and the glory that is to come.

As we know, Daniel 2 begins by announcing that Nebuchadnezzar had had a dream; and unlike previous occasions, he declined to tell his wise men what he had dreamed. He asked them to set before him, both the dream and the interpretation. They replied that that was an impossible quest, which was a right thing as far as they were concerned; but in their desperation, as their lives had been threatened, they turned to the young Hebrew slave, Daniel. They knew that this man was able indeed, to interpret dreams and dark sayings. So Daniel was brought into the presence of the king, and in verse 27, we notice that he answers in the presence of the king and he says, 'the secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king. But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar, what shall be in the latter days'.

Now, b&s and young people, there are no words wasted in the bible; very often God compacts some amazing messages into just a few words! and there is no real distinction in this verse, in this relationship. God is going to make known unto king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be **in the latter days**, a phrase which is repeated in the mouths of the Hebrew prophets on a number of occasions. Prominent places in which it is used is in Isaiah 2, when the mountain of Yahweh's house shall be established in the top of the mountains in the **last days** (it's the same Hebrew phrase as these words, the latter days, here). Ezekiel 38 verses 8 and 16, the same Hebrew phrase is employed, we're going to look at that later on, God willing, in our studies of the prophecies of Daniel. But the statement the latter days, very obviously, according to Isaiah 2 and Ezekiel 38, should be understood to convey to our minds, matters that are going to occur in the domain of the kingdom of men, at the end of Gentile times. At the time, at the epoch when the Lord Jesus Christ will return to the earth.

So here we have a depiction in the words of Daniel under the inspiration of God, that the dream which Nebuchadnezzar saw, was going to relate to the days in which the kingdom of God would supercede the kingdom of men. Verse 29 goes on to say, 'As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass

hereafter; and He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass'. In that verse, b&s, words are not wasted either! but we have another very distinct impression of what God is conveying to the mind of king Nebuchadnezzar. Not only is He concerned with telling Nebuchadnezzar what's going to happen in his kingdom in the last days, He is also interested in conveying to Nebuchadnezzar what is going to come to pass hereafter. In other words, king Nebuchadnezzar, I am going to outline to you certain events that I will preside over, which are going to come to pass in your kingdom, right from this day and forward. It says to us very, very clearly, b&s and young people, that there is but one way to understand these prophecies, because if God is intent on telling Nebuchadnezzar that He wants him to have the understanding about things that are going to come to pass, from here and after, He is going to unravel history before the mind of king Nebuchadnezzar.

There are two things therefore, in verses 28 and 29 that are of parallel importance to understanding the vision that was set before the mind of king Nebuchadnezzar. They are going to have to do with the **latter days** and it's going to have to do with the unravelling of history **from the days of Nebuchadnezzar until the time when the latter days would arrive in the kingdom of men**.

Following on this idea, Daniel divides the vision which king Nebuchadnezzar saw into two separate and distinct parts:

(1) Because in verse 28, he is concerned with telling the king what's going to happen in the latter days, he unravels to the king's notice in verses 31 to 35, matters as they are related to the kingdom of men in the latter days.

(2) Then in verse 36, right down to the end of the chapter almost, he is concerned with unravelling to king Nebuchadnezzar, what shall come to pass hereafter; and because of what shall come to pass hereafter began to occur in the days of king Nebuchadnezzar, we are going to look at that part of the prophecy first of all.

Verse 30 however says, and Daniel in his great humility before the king, could have adopted a very different stance but states, 'As for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mayest know the thoughts of thine heart'. Now b&s there is one unfortunate little phrase there in verse 30, it's the phrase that begins, but for their sakes. In the Septuagint version it's far more clear than that and it reads, 'that these things are done, for the sake of making known the interpretation to the king'. It gives quite a different complexion to that verse, it's rather a little ambiguous as it stands in our AV, and the Septuagint version does indeed help us to understand that the whole reason why God gave to Nebuchadnezzar that dream, was so that Nebuchadnezzar would be able to see what was going to happen in the kingdom of men.

So now God is going to describe to this grand and illustrious king who thinks that there

is nobody greater in all the earth or in all the heaven than himself, He's going to depict to him what God thinks of that grand and glorious kingdom. Have you ever seen, b&s and young people, two known people who are known for their flattery about other people, have you ever seen them come together? and have you ever marvelled about the way in which two great people who flatter everybody that come within their reach and within their grasp, can't see through one another? Have you ever seen that? Well, in a sense, b&s, that's what God is trying to do with this man, He's trying to show this man up for what he is, and we know subsequently, as the other brethren are going to deal with it, in later chapters in Daniel, it took some awesome measures so that God might draw it home to this man, that he was not what he thought he was! He began to be able to see the kingdom of men through the eyes of God, but for the moment he only sees it through his own eyes.

Daniel introduces that to us in verse 31, we're just going to look at verse 31, to explain the way in which this would have appeared before king Nebuchadnezzar. 'Thou, O king, sawest and behold a great image. This great image whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible', and our brother Stephen has shown us quite clearly this morning, that the kingdom of Nimrod was not just a political one, it was a kingdom that had married together the ideas of the state and the perversions of the true religion as has been outlined in the scriptures; and here we have God showing to this great man, king Nebuchadnezzar, a great image. It was indeed a great image, it is an idolatrous figure. It's a figure that men in those days would have fallen down to worship. It is a complete depiction of all the garnishings of the flesh, it is a picture of somebody who thinks they have the preeminence! In verse 31 then it goes on to say 'That it was excellent, it's brightness was excellent and the form thereof was terrible'. It would be such an image as would strike fear into the hearts of those who viewed it, and it is precisely the way in which king Nebuchadnezzar would have seen himself, as the great despot of the day! He was indeed, a very great despot of the day as is depicted in this vision.

Now coming down to verse 36, Daniel after having uttered the words, from verse 31 to verse 35, to which we'll return in a little while, he says this is the dream and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king: Thou O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven, hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.' Now it's a very lovely thing that God has done, b&s and young people, He hasn't left us floundering around in the dark and guessing what that all means. He's told us, as Daniel has unravelled the dream for this illustrious man, king Nebuchadnezzar, He says, 'thou art this head of gold'. But He didn't mean that just king Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold, because in the subsequent verses we notice, verse 39, 'that after thee shall arise another kingdom', now if it's another kingdom, then it quite clearly implies that the thing that went before was not just a king, it was indeed, a kingdom, and a kingdom over which king Nebuchadnezzar presided as a despot, was indeed, the kingdom of Babylon. It was but an extension of that ancient Nimrodian kingdom which

had come into existence under the names of the cities and of the people that we read about from Genesis 10 this morning. We are about, therefore, to see the way in which God is going to manage the affairs of men in their kingdom under His complete and entire jurisdiction. It's God who rules in the kingdoms of men and He sets up whomsoever He will over it, and giveth it into the hands of the basest of men at times.

Now God says through Daniel the prophet, that this particular man, king Nebuchadnezzar, was the epitome because he was a despot, he was the epitome of that head of gold of the image. If we are very careful as we go through these words that the prophet Daniel utters now, b&s, we will be able to see, that these matters are particularly related to the way in which God was going to unravel to king Nebuchadnezzar things that would come to pass hereafter. He is telling us quite clearly then, in this interpretation, that there would be a continuous historical development of things which would outwork as the basis of the interpretation of the dream that king Nebuchadnezzar had had. Now we know, therefore, as Daniel says to the king, 'thou art the head of gold'. "Then we notice in verse 39 that another kingdom shall arise, 'it shall be inferior to thee'; and then another third kingdom of brass which shall bear rule over all the earth'. It is really very unimportant to say, and yet it is very important to say, that history has quite simply stated that the power to arise upon the territory of the ancient Nimrodian kingdom in its Babylonian phase, was indeed, the power of the Medo-Persians.

Then when we view the image, which we will in a few moments on the screen, b&s, we notice that in the image that God portrayed to king Nebuchadnezzar, there is a wonderful wholesomeness about that vision. It is not given in the figure of a deformed man, it is not given in a figure of a malformed man, it is given in the figure of a **man**, and the decorum of the shingles as brother Thomas calls them, really demands that we see that vision in the form of a man, with a head of gold, with a breast and arms of silver, with a belly and thighs of brass, with legs of iron, and with feet part of iron and part of clay. We're told that the head represents the power of Babylon with king Nebuchadnezzar as its head. But then as we go down through that body, we are struck by the fact, that the body is all interconnected, and it's interconnected by the very base of the human anatomy, which is the backbone, which starts right up in the skull and goes right down to the pelvic areas and then joins into the legs and subsequently into the feet of the body. So what is being wonderfully portrayed is the way in which this kingdom is portrayed to Nebuchadnezzar, is that it is but one kingdom! One kingdom which is going to undergo various phases of rulership. A very first principle of understanding all the prophecies of Daniel, is that we should understand that Daniel is not talking about nationalities, he's talking about powers upon territories. He's not really interested in nationalities as such, and the preservation of nationalities; he's looking at **the kingdom of men**, and he's seeing it down through the stream of time in different forms.

Now what was so wonderful about the head of gold? Well, the head of gold as we are told in verse 38, was representative of the power of ancient Babylon. In Daniel 3 verse

1, king Nebuchadnezzar, as soon as he had had the interpretation of the dream made to him, made a great image and set it up in the plain of Dura. A image which very likely was a replica of that which he had seen in his dream, but king Nebuchadnezzar, b&s, was represented by the head of gold in a very wonderful way, because gold is the most valuable metal on our globe. It is a dense and heavy metal, and it represents in that sense, the way in which the dynasty of king Nebuchadnezzar, who was going to subsequently reign over the kingdom of men for approximately the next 70 years, the way in which they issued instructions and laws which could not be altered except by the king himself. He was a man who was not bound by his own decrees and it was that very thing that was the matter in which he was enabled to cause the three friends of Daniel to escape, because it was only his law or his word that was absolute law.

Whereas when we come down into the next kingdom and we notice that the scriptures say that it was a kingdom inferior to the golden kingdom which preceded it, it was a matter in which the king was bound by his own laws, and he could not, therefore, reverse any law that he had previously proclaimed. So the kingdom is described as being inferior in that sense, as having been represented by silver which is an inferior metal to the gold of the head, but there is something else also that we need to notice in the figure that is presented to king Nebuchadnezzar and that is, that it was the chest and the arms that were of silver. Whereas there was **one** part to the head alone, now we are seeing the kingdom expanded into 2 parts. Although we know that it was very basically the Persian kingdom which took over after the Babylonian, it was proceeded by a short kingdom which was a two armed kingdom, in the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians. The anatomy of the human frame in that sense is a very fit replica of the way in which the kingdom of men was still going to continue but it was going to continue in a slightly different phase in its two armed phase.

Also we have a 3rd kingdom of brass, we are told in verse 39, has been able to bear rule over all the earth, and there's something very distinct that we need to notice about this part of the body as well, and that is, that as the backbone goes down and connects the body as a whole, it begins to develop into two thighs, and we're going to see in later classes, b&s, the way in which during the period of the 3rd phase of the Nimrodian kingdom of men, it developed into 2 parts. Two parts that were particularly noticed by God in the prophetic utterances of chapter 11 of Daniel in particular. Then we come down into the division of that empire, into the 2-legged phase, as we notice, the iron kingdom divides into the 2 legs.

Now in verse 40 we notice that the 4th kingdom shall 'be as strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise'. The 4th kingdom as we well know, was the kingdom of the iron power of Rome, It was a power that did break in pieces and bruise and subdued all things; and it shall break in pieces, says the prophet, and bruise'.

Now when we come down into verse 41, we notice that 'whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided, but there

shall be in it the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. Now here is a very distinct development in the kingdom of men; we've gone down through the golden, and silver and brazen and iron stage and we come down into a divided situation because the legs are divided one from the other, and at the extremity of those legs we see the feet and the toes, part of potter's clay and part of iron. And again, Daniel has not left us floundering in the dark, he has told us under the inspiration of God, that in those days the kingdom shall be divided, but in it there would be the strength of the iron and there would also be brittleness, the fragility of the miry clay. He's giving to us a picture now, b&s, not of a homogeneous metal, but of a mixture of two parts of things; iron and miry clay. When we take those two substances, iron and miry clay, we know that we cannot mix them together in such a fashion as to make of them a chemical compound; we've got all the homogenous metals in the gold, silver, brass and the iron, but now we've got a situation in the kingdom of men, in its latter days, a mixture of two parts that won't properly mix together. Since they won't properly mix together, we know that they will be easily separated from one another as they have been mixed together as a mixture but not a chemical compound. This is to occur, says the prophet, in the days of the extremity of these kings upon the earth.

Verse 43 goes on to say, 'Whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men'. Now when we read this part of the prophecy, we understand that Daniel is outlining what it means; and he says, 'in the clay you will see **them mingling themselves with the seed of men**'. What is happening, b&s? There are two components to this part of the image; the components are iron and clay, and it is specifically said by Daniel in verse 43 that they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men, and he's paralleling that with the previous statement where he says that 'iron will be mixed with miry clay'. So it is **the iron** that is going to be mixed with miry clay. We need to bear these things in mind because we're not going to go into their depth at the moment, b&s, but we will see the way in which Daniel develops these matters in other visions subsequently.

But then it goes on to say in verse 43, 'that they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with miry clay'. Now what has Daniel told us so far? he's told us of a historical unravelling of the God-presided developments in the kingdom of Nimrod down through the times, of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome and into days when on that tract of area known as the kingdom of men in the prophecy of Daniel, there would be a mixture of relationships and that the relationships would not cleave together, the iron and the clay, would not cleave together properly.

Then verse 44 goes on to say, 'In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom'. Now just for a few moments, b&s, we would like to recapitulate on what we have seen on the screen. Please don't take any notice of the dates, they're almost certainly not accurate, but there are some very important developments that we will be able to see on the screen, because as Daniel represented this vision to king Nebuchadnezzar, b&s, in the way in which we've just outlined it from verses 37 and onwards, we are struck by the fact that Daniel did not record the image of

Nebuchadnezzar in its whole form. That's a strange thing isn't it? when Daniel outlined the meaning of that vision to king Nebuchadnezzar in the sense of what shall come to pass hereafter, he was only describing the head of gold, and the breast and the arms and the belly and the thighs and the legs, and the feet and the toes were not in the picture. So there must have been 2 ways in which that vision occurred to king Nebuchadnezzar. He described the head of gold first; yes, he did see it as a whole vision, we're going to see that in a few moments; but in this particular aspect of Daniel 2, he is only seeing the head of gold, to be followed by the chest and arms of silver, the two armed kingdom of the Medes and the Persians. That went into dissolution because the third power of Greece (the belly and thighs of brass) defeated them in a series of amazing battles under the leadership of king Alexander the Great; and it was now only the belly and thighs of brass that were in existence of the kingdom of men. That was all that could be seen by men; God could see, and all the servants of God have been able to see, how there is a continuous thread. Now that's the way, b&s, that Daniel outlines in the continuous historical sense, the way in which God would rule in the kingdom of men and place it under the jurisdiction of various powers on different areas of territory in the ancient world. The way in which that came to pass, was like this:

1. There was a territory known as Babylon, (we've been looking at that quite considerably this morning, not just the area, but what went on in that particular powers' area, the region of Babylon). But notice, b&s, that in accordance with the way in which God described that kingdom, that phase of the kingdom of men, in that golden phase, it is a compact kingdom, it's a dense kingdom, it is therefore fittingly represented by the metal of **gold**.

2. Then we traverse history and we come to the breast and the arm power of the kingdom. The kingdom of the Medes and the Persians, a kingdom under whose jurisdiction, God saw fit to extend the borders of the kingdom of men. It's all to do with the kingdom of men; it's God that sets it up and it's God who presides over it, giving it to whomsoever He will.

3. Then the third kingdom of brass comes along, and we notice that the kingdom of men in it's territory has been extended over a much wider area.

4. We come forward into the period of the iron legs of Rome and the kingdom has been further extended over into the west.

Now what have we to say about those 4 particular areas? When Daniel showed to king Nebuchadnezzar that in the days of the 'toe-kings' the God of heaven would set up a kingdom, He revealed to Daniel that in one fell swoop, that kingdom would be broken. He described to Nebuchadnezzar, in a very wonderful order, the way in which the clay and the iron and the brass and the silver and the gold, would be broken to pieces. Here's the gold, b&s, there's the territory of the kingdom of men, b&s, in its Babylonish phase; here's the silver, the territory of the kingdom of men in its silver phase, here's the kingdom of men in its Grecian phase; here's the kingdom of men in its iron phase. If

that whole kingdom, if the iron and the brass and the silver and the gold and the clay are all going to be smitten by the Stone, what really does that mean? Well, it means simply this, that in the days of the toe kings and of these kingdoms, we can confidently expect to see an amalgamation of all those areas, under a power which will be designated, an iron and clay power. Now that's what we've seen so far in the continuous historical out workings of the message that was given to king Nebuchadnezzar.

Let us turn back into Daniel 2, and read now from verse 32. Daniel is here beginning to outline what king Nebuchadnezzar saw, in that grand and glorious and illustrious idolatrous image which was a representation to king Nebuchadnezzar of all the glory of his realm and of his own person. Verse 32 says, 'this image's head was of fine gold, his breasts and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a Stone was cut out without hands which smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay and break them to pieces.

Now b&s, verse 35 is an extremely interesting and important verse. We've got a vision now of this image **standing up**; has it ever stood before today? When was there in existence, b&s, the Babylonish, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian and the Roman and the 10 toed kingdoms, in existence all at one time? When were they all in existence at one time? **Never!** they have never existed upon the face of the earth, the kingdom of men has never existed in that form before! But Daniel relates to king Nebuchadnezzar that it is going to be amalgamated together. All those ancient territories of the realms of Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece and Rome, will be united together. Verse 35 is our proof of that! because king Nebuchadnezzar has it related to him that you saw, king Nebuchadnezzar, a Stone cut out of the mountains without hands, and it smote the image upon the feet and break them to pieces. Then, after that, after that, b&s, after the breaking of the feet, not one foot, two feet, after the breaking of the feet, the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold were broken to pieces **together**. Not one by one! We've seen Babylon pass out of existence; we've seen the Medo-Persians pass out of existence, the Grecians go into dissolution. We've seen the legs rust away, as it were, now we are seeing, all the combination of those metals broken to pieces together. Now if we're all assembled here together, b&s, we're not apart, we're all in this same room, we are together! and the prophet Daniel is impressing upon the mind of king Nebuchadnezzar and upon us, that in the days of the existence of the toe and the feet phase of the kingdom of men, there won't be just the feet, there won't be just the feet and the legs, there won't be just the feet and the legs and the belly, there won't be just the feet, legs, belly and the chest, there will be the whole lot. Now, Daniel, because he's talking about territories, or rather kingdoms upon territories, we can quite easily see, b&s, that the main thrust of this prophecy is to tell us, that in the days of the toe and feet phase of this image of the kingdom of men, there will be a mighty power that will be erected upon two feet, not one, because you won't get any image to stand on one, it will be out of balance; but it will be all in balance, it will be resurrected together again, so that the Stone will not just crush the feet, it will crush the feet with its

initial blow, but coming crashing down to the ground will be all the powers, all the territories, all the nations that occupy all the ancient territories of the kingdom of men, through the Babylonish, Medo-Persian, Grecian and their Roman phases.

And what are we looking for in the latter days? because this is to do with the latter days, b&s, this is the part of the vision that Daniel outlines as being related to the latter days; and he says that we can confidently expect a mixture of two different powers, Rome-iron and clay - something else?, that will not infallibly and in a sense of it being a compound, they weren't mixed together, they will be easily broken apart, but they will come together for the express purpose of being smitten upon the feet of that image.

Then verse 35 says, 'that the iron and the clay, and the brass, and the silver and the gold, shall be broken to pieces together'. Not one by one as we have seen them go into dissolution through the period of the history of the kingdom of men in its various phases. They'll be broken to pieces together and 'they will become like the chaff of the summer threshing floor and that no place will be found for them; and the Stone that smote the image will become a great mountain and it will fill the whole earth'. And what's the Stone that becomes a great mountain that fills the whole earth? there's sometimes discussion about that, b&s, but Daniel makes it quite clear what it is. He says in verse 44, in the days of these kings (that is the 'toe' kingdoms) when all those metals and the clay of the image will be broken to pieces together (and they're all listed there for us). In verse 44 he says, 'In the days of these kings shall **the God of heaven** set up a kingdom', and that wonderful battle which has been in existence ever since the days when Cain was told, 'sin crouches at the door'. B&S, I endorse quite fully what brother Stephen has to say about that! it is very obviously not a sin offering in my mind. It is the fact, that the power of sin was going to come into existence through the mediatorship, shall we say, or through the medium of Cain, and it was going to see in the line of the seed of the serpent, that progression of the kingdom of men in the way in which Nimrod set it up, and in which ways it has been continued down through the stream of time ever since. So the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; it shall consume all other kingdoms and it shall stand for ever. And what is that? It is the Stone power! It is Jesus Christ and the saints as the nucleus of the kingdom of God, as they come, as they have been cut out of the mountains without hands and as they smash that image upon its feet and cause that whole colossus to come crumbling to the ground. Not only are they satisfied, b&s, with breaking it to pieces together, they then begin the work of grinding it to powder so that it will become like the chaff of the summer threshing floors and it will be blown away into non-entity. The kingdom will not be left to other people, but it shall consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand for ever. It will become indeed a great mountain and fill the whole earth.

Now I do have a few maps here, b&s and young people, which may just help us to see the way in which the kingdom of men has developed down through the stream of time. We'll try and get through these very quickly.

We're starting here in **670 BC**. - it's going to have to do with our later considerations in Daniel and we can see here that there is right here in the centre of the earth, as our brother Stephen pointed out, from that satellite picture, there's the Assyrian empire in its ancient form. We're looking at 670 BC. we can see that there are some Greeks over here, but there's no such thing on that map as the Babylonian power.

But we come forward to **560 BC**. and what's happened? the Assyrians are gone, the Babylonians have come into existence, the Greeks are over here, and we're going to see the way by just running through these few maps very quickly, the way in which the kingdom of men has changed form down through the stream of time.

We only come forward another 80 years, to **480 BC**. and the kingdom of Babylon has disappeared. It's the Persian empire that has taken over. Over here in the west, we don't see anything that is known yet as the power of Rome, nor do we see very great power belonging to the Grecian peoples. But that as we well know is going to grow!

So we come forward into **375 BC** and the area of the kingdom of men has not been changed very much; the Persian power is still in very great command.

Coming forward however to **323 BC**. we see that empire of Alexander under the amazing exploits of that man with his military genius, he has spread as Daniel 2 verse 39 says, 'he's borne rule over all the earth'. He has, b&s, extended the boundary of the kingdom of men to its most eastern limits. We are now beginning to see that emerging over here in the west, is a little tiny power by the name of Rome - 323 BC.

We come over to **301 BC**. and we find that the kingdom of Alexander has been dissolved; these matters are going to arrest our attention, God willing, in our 3rd class. The kingdom of Ptolemy and the division of Alexander's empire into four, has taken over. Rome has just grown a little bit, she is just beginning to flex her muscles in world affairs, so that by 270 BC. she's grown a little bit bigger. This now is the fourth kingdom that is emerging upon the kingdom of men.

So coming forward into **220 BC** or thereabouts, we have another little kingdom which occupies our attention, right in here. It's the kingdom of Pergamum, which just a few years later in 220 BC became allied to the power of Rome. Rome is an emerging power as we can see by that map. Rome is still growing and over in the east we still have a large Seleucid kingdom, one of the four divisions of Alexander's; then Rome is really emerging in the west.

So coming forward now to **74 BC**. we notice that Rome has become the power on the earth. She continues to grow, so that in **44 BC** her borders have been expanded further over into the west, not yet over into the British Isles, but certainly further over into the west.

Just after Christ, in **AD 14**, we have the Roman empire in what is approximately it's

largest limits, although it still does continue to grow and become the iron phrase of the kingdom of men by the year **AD 67**.

Then we come forward to the last map we have, we notice that the legs of that image dissolve into the feet and toes of the image. Here we have the depiction of the way in which in about the year **AD 330**, there was a division formed between eastern and western Rome. So we can quite clearly see the way in which those legs have divided. Already we are seeing in the north, the way in which there are a lot of barbarian tribes developing, which subsequently took over on the area of Rome, and some of them became what is known as 'the 10-toed kingdoms' of the divided state of Rome after that period of time.

So very, very briefly, b&s, we have run through a lot of history this morning. We needed to get that far, because that's how far Daniel gets. What we would like to conclude upon this morning is this, that we have seen a very remarkable development of the kingdom of men through its various metallic phrases. We have seen at the mouth of Daniel the prophet, some amazing forecasts that we've been able to see down through the stream of time. What we've looked at this morning in Daniel 2, **is the blueprint** for all of God's activities on that area of land which is called in Daniel's prophecy, the kingdom of men. Every subsequent utterance, b&s, which doesn't have to do with the Jews, every subsequent prophetic utterance hangs upon the skeletal of that great image colossus, which Nebuchadnezzar saw as representative of his view of the kingdom of men. He saw it in all its glory - at our next class, God willing, we're going to see it in all its ugly deformity, because as we said last evening, people who know and understand the truth, are really the only people who are saved! They are b&s! We have been given some amazing messages, it is the only form of comfort and source of hope that will enable us to walk through the kingdom of men in its various phases and stay untouched by the ugliness and the deformity of those beastly kingdoms. It is to that Word, b&s, that we must look, day by day, rightly dividing, and opening it up, so it might cause not only the Word to stand erect, but that we might be, in some small way, a replica of that Word, standing erect in a world that lies in wickedness. It does lie in wickedness, b&s, and may we all thank our God that He has given us an oasis in the wilderness of the people today, that we might drink deeply of the wells of salvation; to be persuaded that God can make us wiser than all our teachers and our contemporaries; be persuaded that God can make us wise unto salvation through the more sure Word of prophecy that He has so graciously given to us, and rightly, b&s, rightly dividing and rightly understanding so that it can be a power in our lives for good.